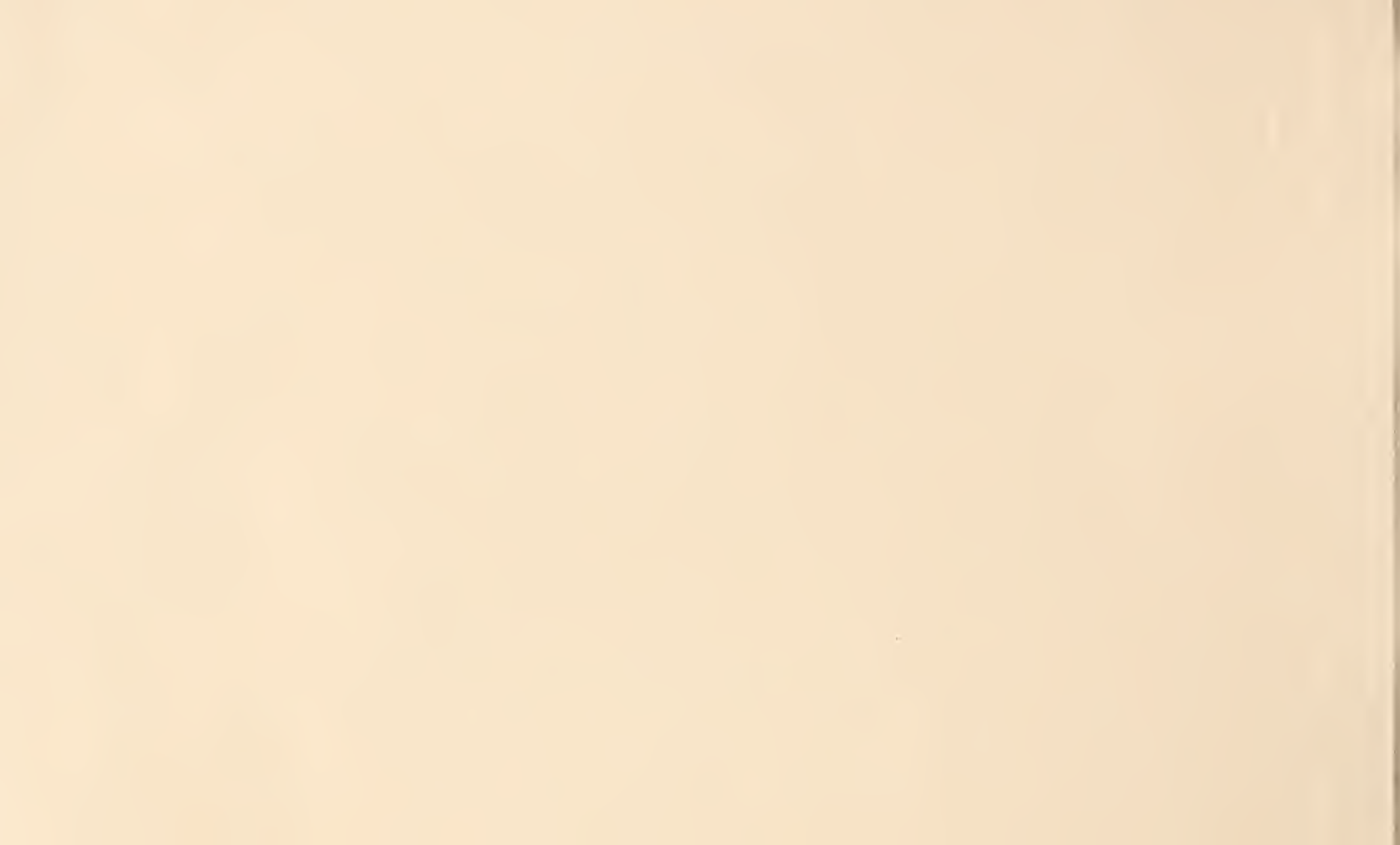


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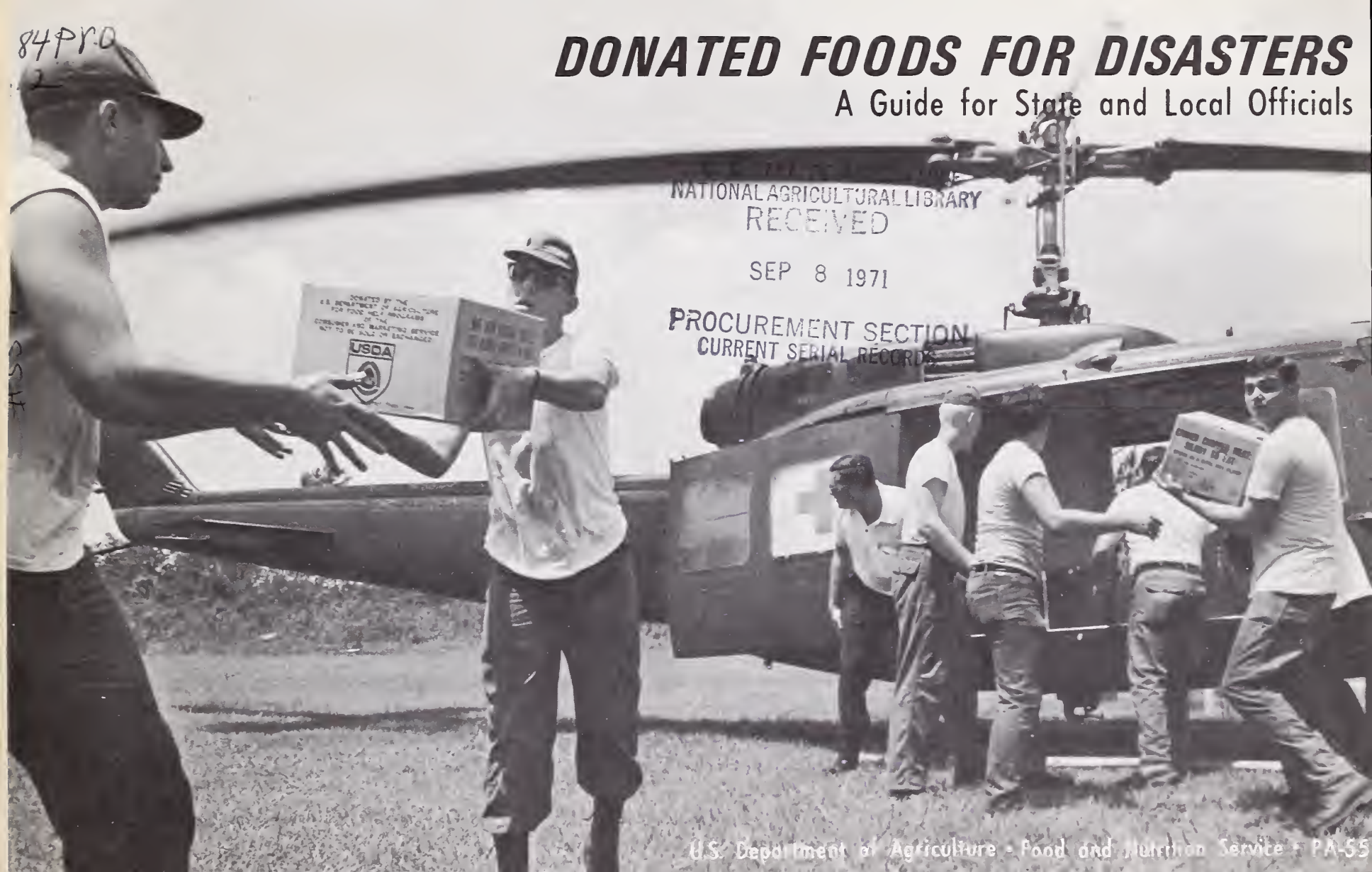
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DONATED FOODS FOR DISASTERS

A Guide for State and Local Officials



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GOOD CUPPER RELIEF
READY TO EAT
CANNED IN A BOX, NOT PLASTIC

Foreword

This pamphlet is a guide for State and local officials connected with the Commodity Distribution Program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It outlines food distribution responsibilities and possible courses of action during natural disasters such as flood, fire, freeze, earthquake, tornado, hurricane, landslide, explosion, and man-made disasters.

State and local officials connected with the Food Stamp Program will also find pertinent information: *In case of disasters, commodities can be brought into a Food Stamp area.* In that situation it will help if all who administer food assistance programs are aware of what this involves.

Disaster preparedness is essential. We never know where or when a disaster may strike. Preparedness is the key to well-executed food distribution operations.

Distribution of USDA-donated foods nationally is the responsibility of the Food and Nutrition Service. Responsibility for this function within the States rests with the State director of commodity distribution in the agency designated by the State to administer the Commodity Distribution Program. All persons connected in any way with the program should know who their State commodity director is, how to reach him, and the essentials of his preparedness plan.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture now donates more than 2 billion pounds of food annually to nearly 81,000 schools, more than 7,000 summer camps for children, and almost 9,000 institutions in 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the Trust Territories, and to about 4 million needy persons in family units each month in more than 1,300 political subdivisions and Indian agencies in 39 States, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam and the Trust Territories. Each of these outlets represents a potential supply of food for emergency and disaster feeding.

Disaster victims have priority in the use of USDA-donated foods. Every effort should be made to meet their needs promptly. No formal declaration of disaster is required—need is the primary factor in making these foods available for disaster feeding.

Preestablished authority makes foods available to the extent needed for the care of persons affected by natural or man-made emergencies or disasters.

The duration of the need for emergency commodity distribution will be determined by the director of the appropriate Food and Nutrition Service Regional Office.

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Authority

Emergency or disaster food distribution authority is contained in regulations issued by the Secretary of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Agriculture entitled "Donation of Food Commodities for Use in United States for School Lunch Programs, Training Students in Home Economics, Summer Camps for Children, and *Relief Purposes*, and in State Correctional Institutions for Minors."

Section 250.8(e) says that "Disaster organizations are eligible to receive commodities under section 416 and section 32 for distribution to disaster victims. Distributing agencies making distribution to such organizations shall immediately inform the appropriate Regional Office, FNS, thereof. Such organizations shall be eligible for the duration of the disaster, as determined by the Secretary . . ."

Section 250.3(c) defines "*Disaster organizations*" as "organizations authorized by appropriate Federal or State officials to assist disaster victims."

Section 250.3(d) defines "*Disaster victims*" as "persons who, because of Acts of God or man-made disasters, are in need of food assistance, whether or not a determination

has been made pursuant to Public Law 81-875."

In food stamp areas: Although under normal conditions USDA commodities cannot be distributed in areas where the Food Stamp Program operates, Section 250.8(e) of the Regulations also states that disaster organizations "may make distribution of federally donated food to households in areas where the Food Stamp Program is in operation . . . so long as the Secretary of Agriculture finds that the commercial channels of food distribution have been disrupted because of an emergency situation caused by a national or other disaster."

Furthermore, the Secretary of Agriculture has delegated authority to make this determination to the Administrator, Food and Nutrition Service.

Commodity Availability

Food commodities are available from any one or a combination of sources, depending upon the nature and extent both as to time and place of the disaster and the kind(s) of programs operating in or near the affected areas.

Possible Sources

USDA-donated foods generally are available from:

- School lunch storerooms
- Institution storerooms
- Needy family distribution depots
- Local warehouses (city or county owned or leased, or commercial warehouses in which space is rented to store USDA-donated commodities)
- State warehouses (either State-owned or leased, or commercial warehouses in which space is rented to store USDA-donated commodities)
- Diversion of foods by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (rerouting carloads of foods in transit, or on order for regular programs in the same or other States).

Any commodity donated by the USDA designated for schools and other eligible outlets (Section 32 or 416 commodity) may be used for disaster feeding purposes.

Commodities designated as Section 6 and foods purchased by individual schools with school lunch funds may be used only if other foods are not adequate and available. When used, they must be replaced immediately following the disaster by the using organization through purchase

of the same or similar commodities of equal value and quality, or be paid for in cash. This is required by the National School Lunch Program legislation.

Responsible Agency

The Commodity Distribution Division of USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (through five Food and Nutrition Service Regional Offices—see page 7) is responsible for assisting State distributing agencies in their on-the-scene activities.

State distributing agencies and recipient agencies are responsible for arranging in advance for the release of commodities for emergency or disaster purposes and for arranging with Food and Nutrition Service Regional Offices for additional supplies and for replenishing regular program stocks. State distributing agencies are also responsible for authorizing, executing, and supervising program operations under Phases I, II, III, and IV described in the section "Disaster Action."

Preparedness Planning

Adequate planning will provide a course of action needed when disaster strikes.

Every person connected with the distribution and use of USDA-donated foods should be familiar with the function he would be expected to perform during a disaster.

Coordination with local officials in charge of disaster op-

erations is essential. Equally essential, is learning names of your State distributing agencies and determining from them the action to be taken in releasing USDA-donated foods for emergency or disaster use.

A "Statement of Understanding," issued jointly by the American School Food Service Association and the American Red Cross and revised in November 1968, exemplifies "Preparedness Planning" in action.

Basic in this statement is recognition of the vital role which school food service personnel play in carrying out natural disaster responsibilities, particularly mass feeding operations. State school lunch agencies can render an important service by putting out information and guidance in monthly newsletters and in workshops on the responsibilities and action to be taken by local school administrators and school lunch personnel in emergency situations. Local school lunch personnel are urged to serve as volunteer members of the local Red Cross Chapter's subcommittee on food preparedness.

In preparedness efforts, an appraisal of USDA-donated food supplies should be made and reported to the State distributing agency.

Disaster Action

Phase I—*Immediate Emergency*. This involves mass

feeding of evacuees or other persons affected by the disaster for the duration of the emergency. Public school sites are most frequently used as evacuation centers and their lunchroom facilities for mass feeding operations. Upon proper receipt, Section 32 and 416 commodities may be released to any of the several approved disaster organizations. If such foods will not suffice, disaster organizations may, upon proper receipt, also draw upon food supplies purchased by the school or donated by the Department of Agriculture specifically for school lunch purposes (Section 6 commodities). *If commodities purchased by the school, or Section 6 commodities, are used in the emergency feeding, they must be paid for or replaced as described on page 4.*

Phase II—*Continuing Emergency*. Commodities which are available for the family distribution program may be made available to properly identified evacuees who are in the process of returning to their homes to reestablish themselves.

Phase III—*Post-Emergency*. Disaster victims, properly identified as such, may be certified to receive commodities which are available to needy families for a post-emergency period which may continue for 30 to 90 days with the approval of the appropriate Food and Nutrition Service Regional Office.

Phase IV—*Regular Family Distribution*. The disaster may be of such a serious nature as to deprive a large number of families of their livelihood in the affected area for an indefinite period. Such situations may warrant the establishment of a regular family distribution program. If so, these needy persons will be certified to receive USDA-donated foods on the basis of standards of eligibility in effect in the State, which include income and resources criteria. The establishment of such regular or continuing family distribution programs is the responsibility of local government officials, city and/or county, working in close cooperation with the State distributing agency.

The Food Stamp Program is another alternative local officials may choose.

In all phases of disaster food distribution it is necessary for the State distributing agency to obtain proper receipts for all Department-donated foods used and to follow the required record keeping and accountability procedures as outlined in Food and Nutrition Service instructions.

Reporting

In order that USDA and State officials may be of maximum assistance and because of the need for informing the public of activities in connection with disaster feeding operations, the USDA requires that the most expeditious means of communication should be used immediately by

local officials to report to State distributing agencies any impending disaster and any action in the initial stages of Phase I. Frequent contact is necessary as disaster operations move through each phase. The completion of each phase and the kinds and quantities of commodities used should be reported separately to the State distributing agency.

Summary

There cannot be too much emphasis placed on the need for preparedness planning. All persons involved should familiarize themselves with details of such planning and their individual responsibilities. Local personnel should know: (1) the name of their State director of commodity distribution and how to reach him, (2) the basic essentials of his preparedness plan, (3) the names of the recognized disaster organizations, and (4) the function each will be expected to perform during a disaster.

Although Food Stamp workers have no such responsibilities, they can prepare for disaster feeding in their areas by knowing what commodity programs operate in their vicinity and which would be likely to distribute during a disaster.

For Additional Information

Additional information about the operation of the emergency and disaster food assistance program can be obtained from the following Regional Offices:

NORTHEAST

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service
26 Federal Plaza
New York, N.Y. 10007
Telephone: Area Code 212
264-1194

Connecticut
Delaware
District of
Columbia
Maine
Maryland
Massachusetts

New Hampshire
New Jersey
New York
Pennsylvania
Rhode Island
Vermont
West Virginia

SOUTHWEST

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service
500 South Ervay Street
Dallas, Tex. 75201
Telephone: Area Code 214
749-2878

Arkansas
Colorado
Kansas
Louisiana

New Mexico
Oklahoma
Texas

SOUTHEAST

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service
1795 Peachtree Road NE.
Atlanta, Ga. 30309
Telephone: Area Code 404
526-5131

Alabama
Florida
Georgia
Kentucky
Mississippi
North Carolina

Puerto Rico
South Carolina
Tennessee
Virginia
Virgin Islands

WEST

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service
630 Sansome Street
San Francisco, Calif. 94111
Telephone: Area Code 415
556-4950

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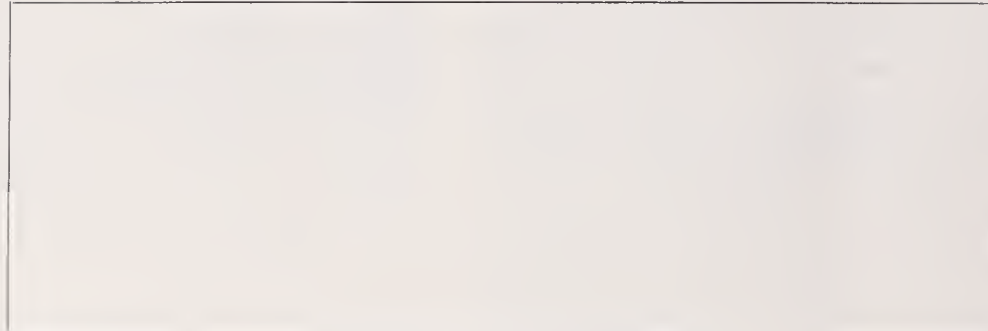
MIDWEST

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service
536 South Clark Street
Chicago, Ill. 60605
Telephone: Area Code 312
353-6664

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